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## OLD SATSUMA.

ONE of the most interesting articles that has appeared in any of the magazines of late is that upon Old Satsuma in the September number of Harper's by Prof. Edward S. Morse, from which we are permitted to copy the two accompanying illustrations:

Nowhere in the world, says Prof. Morse, is the taste for collecting old things more common than in Japan. The Japanese, equally with us, have their fevers of collecting. The hen fever, the rabbit fever, the chrysanthemum fever, break out in turn, have their run, and languish, or remain dormant till the germs of these or of some other craze are sown. In the more rational fields of collecting the Japanese exceed all other nations. Where you meet with one man possessed with this spirit in our country, you find scores of them in Japan. Large accumulations are rarely made, for want of means and room; but travel where you will, in the city or most remote country village, there is sure to be some one to show a collection of rare old pottery, stone implements, old tiles, coins, or something of the kind. The Japanese have their special fields of collecting—as, for example, pottery, tiles, pictures, books, autographs, swords, armor, old brocades, old paper, musical instruments, furniture, archaeological relics—and these collections may be counted by hundreds. So permanent is the taste for collecting old pottery and old swords that special parties are formed for the sole purpose of testing one another's ability in correctly identifying difficult or puzzling objects. When these objects have a stamp or mark, it is carefully concealed, so that the skill of the amateur may be more surely tried. Second-hand book stores, bric-a-brac shops, and even temporary sidewalk booths, are to be met with through the length and breadth of the empire. The ceramic craze has endured for hundreds of years, and has had its literature for centuries.

I was struck at the outset with the almost entire absence from these collections of what we regard as decorative pottery; that is to say, pottery of the nature of what the public have recognized under the names of Kioto, Kaga, and Satsuma. In lieu of these one sees sober little tea jars, brown bowls, irregular-shaped dishes, vessels of various kinds, and these either with no decoration upon them, or the merest suggestion of an attempt that way in one or two hasty touches in monochrome. Indeed, the fastidious way in which these specimens are carefully removed from their boxes and silk coverings, and afterward held in two hands as tenderly, nay, as caressingly, as a mother holds her first-born, seems the veriest absurdity, until one has come to appreciate the intrinsic merit and beauty in their unobtrusive glazes. The rich brown of the Seto glazes, and deep grays of the Karatsu, the ripe and varied brown autumn-like colors in the tea jars of Omi and Iga, the delicious fawns and buff and rich deep colors of Takatori, are only to be appreciated by study. Many of these unobtrusive gems, excite our admiration by their color and contour alone. Even a blind man might find a certain charm in their wonderful smoothness and finish.

An illustration and description of the more prominent types of Satsuma may be of some assistance in enabling the student of Japanese pottery to identify his pieces, and the information may not be without interest to the art collector, as showing the extent and range of pottery which the name Satsuma really covers.

Japan proper, not including Yezo, consists of three large islands—the largest, which we may regard as the mainland, and two others, which lie at the south, separated by deep and narrow seas. The southernmost one—Kiusiu—includes among other provinces the province of Satsuma, which, with Osumi, makes up its southernmost extremity. A deep gulf indents the island, on the west side of which lies Satsuma, and on the east side Osumi. Kagoshima, the capital of Satsuma, is one of the most ancient towns of the empire.

Probably one of the earliest types of pottery introduced into Satsuma by the Koreans was a ware known to the Japanese under the general name of Mishima. This is a hard stoneware, usually with a gray glaze, and having a decoration in white or

white and black, effected by a process of inlaying. The figures, whether conventional or natural, are in outline, and are stamped—rarely incised—in the vessel before baking, and while the clay is still soft. The pottery is then baked, and before the glaze is applied for the second baking the designs are filled with a white clay. It is interesting to observe that wherever Korean potters settled in Japan this inlaid form of decoration, or encaustic method, has persisted, notably in the provinces of Higo, Suwo, and Hizen. In the island of Tsushima, which stands midway between the southern extremity of Korea and Japan, the pottery is decorated in a similar way. While the Korean Mishima has rapidly deteriorated in its native country, judging from recent specimens brought from Korea, the transplanted process has continually improved under the hands of the Japanese, who have added their own refinements and taste to the hints derived from their Korean teachers, and to-day the pottery made after this style by the Higo potters must rank as among the most refined and perfect in Japan.

Among the Korean pieces in my collection are a number of Mishima forms, and these show the stamped impression of formal designs, usually stars, or star-shaped figures, and revolving bands. The choicest specimen, an old Korean vase, has the design cut out by hand, representing large leaves disposed in such a way as to suggest Persian influence. The vase is somewhat irregular, rudely potted, and blistered. In one place the encaustic design has broken away. The gray glaze is somewhat iridescent, the result of age and consequent decomposition of the surface. Not only are these formal designs common, but the crane often forms the motive, and the impression of this design is usually filled with a white and black clay. While this method of treatment has the generic term of Mishima, there are a number of species, so to speak, which the Japanese connoisseur recognizes by appropriate names.

In one form vertical lines are drawn upon the bowl, between which are zigzag lines, and from the resemblance of these lines to a Japanese calendar, the term *Koyome Mishima* is given. The cloud and crane decoration is known as *Unkako Mishima*. If flowers form the motive, it is called the *Hama Mishima*; or if lines are drawn crossing one another, it is called *Higaki Mishima*—higaki meaning fence. In some cases the white clay is rudely painted on the vessel in long sweeps, and this is called *Hakame Mishima*, or "brush-painted." While the Satsuma Mishima has generally adhered to the Korean archetype



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NISHIKI DE SATSUMA.

in being decorated with conventional designs of circles, dots, radiating or wheel-like figures and the like, the Higo potters have broken away from these primitive methods which, however, characterized their early pottery; and the most beautiful designs of flowers and bamboo, either free or inclosed, and bands of Greek fret, introduced from China, which the Japanese call the Raimon style of ornamentation, mark their exquisite productions, and a very immediate way of distinguishing Higo Mishima from Satsuma Mishima may be got by observing the character of the design. Exceptions, however, to this rule occur. Aside from this distinguishing mark, the glaze of the typical Higo is, on the whole, darker and clearer than that of Satsuma, and possesses a higher polish, and the clay is usually finer, and the base of the pieces more smoothly finished. The collector will find among the more ancient specimens of each, as identified by Japanese experts, but little, if any, difference. At least I have tried and given up in despair the effort to harmonize Japanese expert testimony with the appearance of the wares, and I may say that their resemblance to Korean Mishima is so marked that it is almost impossible to determine the dividing line between them.

Specimens of white Satsuma Mishima inlaid with black are rare to find. The clay is yellowish sand-colored, rather coarse and dry, and the glaze is white, thick and cracked. The group of three specimens shown on page 46 gives a good example of this ware. The bowl is a choice specimen dating back a hundred and fifty years or more, the gourd-shaped bottle is over one hundred years old, and the clove boiler, though looking fresh and new, may be nearly as old.

The Nishiki de Satsuma was a ware altogether too expensive to come into general use; much of it was made either for the immediate use of the Daimio or other high personages, or to form presents to men of exalted rank. Plain white satsuma was doubtless made for general use. By constant use it became richly though lightly colored, and one at all familiar with the first coloring of a meerschaum may form some idea of a bit of old Satsuma; and having used this comparison, it may be carried still further by adding that artificially colored or stained Satsuma recalls the appearance of a spurious or cheap meerschaum; indeed, the simile may be completed by stating that a good deal of pride is taken in the gradual coloring of a bit of Satsuma by constant use, and a peculiar yellow cloth is kept at hand to polish the glaze from time to time, very much as a smoker polishes his pipe.

Other provinces have at various times produced wares after the style of Nishiki de Satsuma. Space will permit only a passing reference to some of the more prominent of these. Reference has already been made to the plain white crackle of Buzen. An essay of white glazed and brocade-painted ware was made in Idsumi a number of years ago, but no success attended this venture, as the ware possessed none of the good points of either Satsuma or Awata. The clay was fine enough, but soft and of poor color, and the dull-lustred glaze was chalky white, and coarsely and unevenly crackled. Dr. Minpei, of Awaji, some sixty-five years ago, made a light crackled faience, with strong and bright-colored decoration in enamels and gold. While it bore some resemblance to Satsuma, it could not be confounded with it. Good pieces were superior to Awata of that date.

The group on page 45 contains examples of various ages of Nishiki de Satsuma. The hexagonal bowl nearly in the center of the group is from the collection of Ninagawa Noritane, and is the specimen figure in his work, and was believed by Ninagawa to date back to near the beginning of this century. It is thick and heavy, and has a delicious warm coloring from use and age. The decoration, though finely painted, is not specially good. The bowl bottom upward is also from Ninagawa's collection, and was supposed by him to be somewhat older than the other. The decoration is very rich, and the glaze is remarkable for the fineness and evenness of its crackle. The *te-buro*, or hand furnace, as well as the bowl to the left, and the teapot and bowl to the right, are excellent specimens of old Satsuma. The bowl in front and to the right is a remarkably beautiful example of the last of the genuine Satsuma. The little *koro*, or incense burner, in front, is interesting as representing the very earliest decorated Satsuma; its surface is quite glossy, and the crackle can only be detected by the aid of a lens. A similar specimen is figured in an unlettered and unpublished plate of Ninagawa's which was destined, with others, to form another part of his celebrated work. In Ninagawa's specimen a perforated top is shown, but the legs are broken away. In this specimen the legs are preserved, but the top is wanting.

THE Queen Regent of Spain is about to send a fan to the Duchess of Edinburgh as a souvenir of her visits to Barcelona and Madrid. "The fan is made of tortoise-shell, with the monogram of the Queen-Regent in brilliants and rubies. But its chief value is in the paintings done on it by the Spanish artist Melida. There are six pictures on the fan—three on each side. The first set represents two sailors, one English and the other Spanish, hoisting their respective colors from a Spanish balcony; a view of the harbor of Barcelona; and a most delicate representation of an old Gothic monument that the Queen and the Duchess visited together. The other side of the fan has the coat-of-arms of the Duchess, an Andalusian girl at her balcony, a Cordobese bandit—an allusion, perhaps, to the robbery of which the Duchess was the victim during her voyage from Cordoba to Granada."

## ITALIAN GILDING BY HEAT.

A NEW mode of transferring drawings and designs on to paper, parchment, leather, wood, silk or other stuffs comes to us from Italy. It is called pencil gilding because the work is chiefly executed by means of a hot, pointed metal instrument, which is used for fixing the precious metal on the foundation. This novel art enables us to ornament books, portfolios, leather bindings, chests, cushions, chairs and all sorts of furniture, and objects of luxury and use either with or without the addition of painting or embroidery, in a highly artistic fashion; and is moreover far better and more durable than any other old fashioned attempts at gilding by means of gold and bronze powder, mussel-shells, etc. The latter can never have the fine polish of the real gold used in pencil gilding; it also becomes dull and lacks the fine correct drawing belonging to our new method. Any one, who has tried it will perceive the advantage of the real leaf gold, both as regards appearance and its fusion with the foundation.

The main process consists of coating the object to be gilded with white of egg, placing leaf gold upon it, and then drawing, we might almost say impressing the pattern, laid over the gold with heated pointed metal pencils. The white of egg must be thinned with water—two parts of albumen to one of water—and well beaten for five minutes, then it can be smoothly spread on the material with a bit of sponge. Parchment, saten, and cardboard or paper only require one coat of white of egg, morocco and other sorts of leather must have at least two, and be it re-

marked, that as with other sticky substances, the second coat can only be laid on after the first is quite dry. Calf leather immediately absorbs the albumen without leaving a trace of stickiness on the surface, and it is therefore necessary to brush the leather over with dissolved gelatine and when it is quite dry apply the white of egg. As a general rule it is also advisable to try the adhesive power of the foundation before beginning the pattern; this can be done by trial strokes with the hot pencil, which will soon show how many coatings of the white of egg are necessary to make the gold adhere to the surface. The worker must also bear in mind, that a close-grained hard material, such as fine saten, requires a greater heat in the pencil and more pressure in working than needful with a soft foundation. As regards silks, if the gilding on them is to be durable they must be thoroughly impregnated

with the adhesive preparation, and it is better to mix a little liquid glue or dissolved gelatine with the white of egg. And lastly to avoid making the silk unpleasantly stiff and thus depriving it of its original soft beauty, we would advise the worker to apply the stiffening only on the very pattern itself. To do this well, the traced pattern must be fastened with drawing pins over the silk, the outlines carefully gone over and the pattern partially lifted up, but not removed, lest in putting it on again the correct place be missed and the exact lines spoiled. Now coat over the inside of the sketch with a fine brush or quill pen, then put on the gold, replace the pattern over it, and begin to work with the hot pencils according to the following instructions. The same way of working applies to all stuffs, and of course demands the greatest accuracy. French varnish is used in place of white of egg for wooden surfaces, when it is dry strew it over with powdered resin, which can be procured at all bookbinders under the name of gilding powder, and then put on the gold leaf. As varnish is easily damaged and the warmth of the hand may affect it, it is well to let the working hand rest on a piece of cardboard.

Nor must it be forgotten that leaf gold is a most delicate thing to handle, it sticks to everything and is moved with almost a breath, consequently putting it on is no easy matter; and the foundation surface must first be thoroughly dry. For large pieces of work we would therefore advise the use of a gold-worker's cushion with protecting flap. This "cushion" consists of a strong



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MISHIMA SATSUMA, BLACK ON WHITE.